

The Mayor's Military and Veterans' Affairs Committee
Minutes of the Meeting
January 13, 2004

1. The Mayor's Military and Veterans' Affairs Committee (MVAC) convened on January 13, 2004, in Room 802 of the Municipal Building. The meeting was called to order at approximately 8:25 AM by the MVAC President, COL(R) Thom Tuckey. Members in attendance were:

LTC(R) Jim Daskal
Mr. Terry Smith
COL(R) John Vigna

COL(R) Bill Mannel
COL(R) Thom Tuckey

2. Minutes. The minutes of the preceding meeting were approved without change.

3. Old Business.

a. Update Event for Veterans Groups.

(1) LTC(R) Daskal presented two alternatives for this event, including site proposals, menus and costs, proposed date, etc. After some discussion, it was decided that the MVAC would recommend the following to the Mayor for approval:

- Event date/time: February 18, 2004
- Location: VFW Post 3200, Gun Club Road, Augusta
- Invitees: All elected officials of each organization, including veterans organizations in Columbia County
- Caterer: VFW Post 3200
- Menu: Salad bar, baked chicken, seasoned green beans, baked potato, desert, and coffee or tea, plus a no-host bar
- Costs: \$7.50 per hour for bartender
Happy hour prices at the bar
\$7.75 per meal
\$150 hall rental, to be paid by LTC(R) Daskal

Subsequent to this MVAC meeting, the Mayor approved all of these recommendations.

(2) The planned agenda was as follows:

- Welcome and introductions by COL(R) Tuckey
- Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance [Note: No one was identified to do this.]
- Dinner
- Remarks by Mayor Young
- Briefing about the MVAC — its role, members, etc. — to be done by Mr. Smith

- Briefing about the status of Augusta's VA Medical Center [Mr. Smith agreed to contact Mr. Earnest Johnson to arrange for a VA representative to conduct this briefing.]
- Briefing on the future of Fort Gordon and Eisenhower Army Medical Center, with regard to BRAC, to be done by COL(R) Tuckey
- Questions & Answers, to be led by Mayor Young and COL(R) Tuckey

(3) LTC(R) Daskal provided the draft of an invitation letter, to be prepared and mailed by the Mayor's office. He promised also to provide the Mayor's office with a current address list for the veterans' organizations in the area.

(4) COL(R) Tuckey stated that he would bring the necessary equipment for PowerPoint presentations at the event.

(5) It was desired that representatives of EAMC and the Retirement Services Office be in attendance at the event, to answer any questions that might arise concerning those organizations. COL(R) Vigna promised to send a letter to the EAMC Commander concerning this, and Mr. Smith promised to arrange for an RSO representative.

b. Georgia Association of Broadcasters. The association was still finalizing the call-in network that was to be included as part of the planned Public Service Announcements (PSA). It was anticipated that the PSAs would begin to be broadcast soon.

c. Pilot Program — EAMC & VA. COL(R) Tuckey was still planning to meet with a point of contact concerning this program, so that he could get additional information about it.

d. Newspaper Insert. COL(R) Tuckey stated that February 6 was the new target date for publication of the planned newspaper insert about Fort Gordon's economic impact on the CSRA. An MVAC member suggested that it would be beneficial for the insert to include "open letters" from some of the local political leaders.

e. Georgia Public Television Special. COL(R) Tuckey was still trying to obtain a copy of the broadcast that had shown on GPTV on the Friday before Thanksgiving, portraying the efforts of various Georgia communities to prepare for the next round of base realignments and closures (BRAC).

4. New Business.

a. Recognition of Deployed Servicemembers/Units. COL(R) Tuckey announced that the Mayor was interested in finding a way to recognize individual soldiers returning from deployments and mobilizations by way of EAMC. He is also interested in presenting some type of unit recognition when deployed units return to or through Fort Gordon. Various options for this recognition were under consideration, and it was thought that the MVAC might have a role in making this happen.

b. Commercial Opportunities on Fort Gordon. Mr. Smith mentioned that local business people and entrepreneurs should consider the economic and business opportunities that might be found at Fort Gordon, and he mentioned that a Huddle House restaurant would soon open on post and that the post was pursuing the possibilities of having one or more of its gymnasiums operated by an off-post commercial enterprise. He further stated that the post may enclose the pavilion behind the on-post bus station, for the purpose of providing a site for businesses that might serve the post's population. He explained that there were a number of rules that pertained to the placement of a business on post — e.g., it must be consistent with the military mission and with good order and discipline, and the Army and Air Force Exchange Service must decline the opportunity to open a similar enterprise — but there still were real opportunities available.

5. Other Discussion.

Gate Two. A question arose as to a rumored plan to close Fort Gordon's Gate Two as a test during February. Mr. Smith was unaware of such a plan and promised to look into it. [He later learned that a test was under preliminary consideration for Gate Two, but the test would not close the gate. It would merely alter the gate's hours of operation and limit access there to vehicles bearing the DoD registration sticker. It was not known what the specific terms of the test would be, when it would occur, or if it would occur, at all.]

6. Adjournment. The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:30 AM. The next meeting was scheduled for February 10, 2004, at 8:20 AM, in Room 802 of the Municipal Building.

Respectfully submitted, January 16, 2004:

Terence Smith
Secretary
Military & Veterans
Affairs Committee

CF:

Mayor Young

COL Henderson, Garrison Commander, Fort Gordon

Ms. Buchholz, Office of the Garrison Commander, Fort Gordon

Each active MVAC member